

## ifa ECP Monitor At a Glance

# United Kingdom

## PRÉCIS

The United Kingdom is often described as a soft power superpower. Although British cultural diplomacy can look back on a long tradition, it has been profoundly affected by various disruptive developments like Brexit. The country is therefore trying to reposition itself as a truly global nation and revive old partnerships with the "Global Britain" strategy and using. In its ECP approach, cultural and educational promotion and economic interests go hand in hand. Export-oriented strategies in higher education or promotion of British innovation and expertise not only expand the influence of the UK but also support its economic security.

### Outstanding Fact:

The British Council (est. 1934) is the oldest cultural relations organisation in the world and is active in over 100 countries.

#### KEY INDICATORS 2019

<b>Population</b>	Rank/number	22 <sup>nd</sup> / 66.6 million
<b>GDP</b>	Rank/number	6 <sup>th</sup> / €2.5 trillion
<b>GDP per capita</b>	Rank/number	23 <sup>rd</sup> / €37,770
<b>Cultural Economy</b>	As share of GDP	0.2
<b>Education economy</b>	As share of GDP	4.8
<b>R&amp;D economy</b>	As share of GDP	1.7
<b>Media economy</b>	As share of GDP	0.2
<b>Geopolitical position</b>	Hard power rank	8
	World trade rank	4
	Soft power rank	2
	Diplomacy rank	11

#### OVERVIEW OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY 2019

<b>Number of countries present</b>	169
<b>Number of institutions abroad</b>	About 4,400
<b>FTE staff</b>	about 22,000
<b>Freelance and local staff</b>	about 38,000
<b>Government support (€ million)</b>	1,700 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Comparative ECP group</b>	major

#### Main Objectives

- Promote the values and influence of Great Britain
- Promote the country's economic security and opportunities globally
- Promote UK's innovation and expertise and the advancement of education

<sup>1</sup> Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development (FCDO) budget allocation to programme "SO2—Project Our Global Influence" (£1,514,804,000).

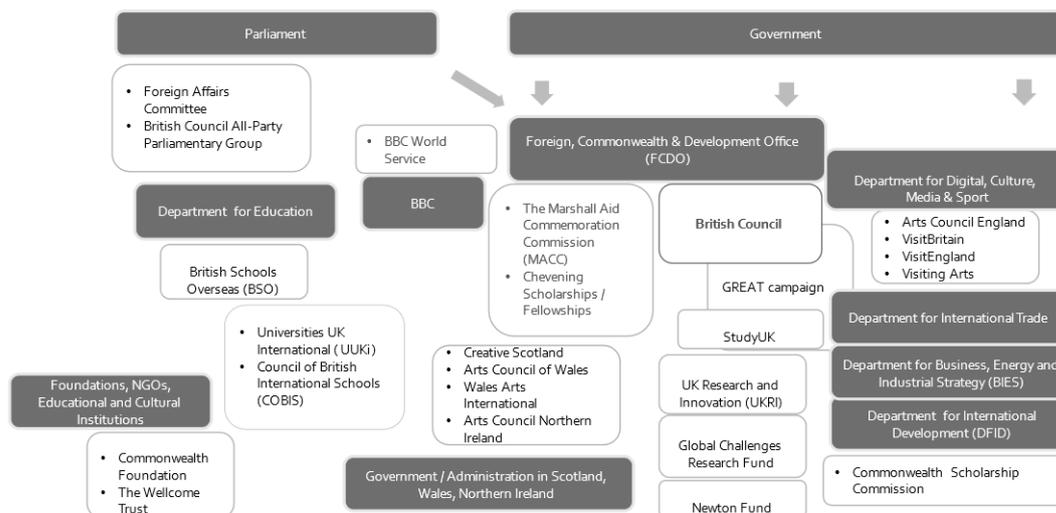
## Policy Context

- After Brexit, the UK will have to strengthen its overseas network, especially in the Commonwealth and emerging markets
- The new ECP strategy is the creation of a “Global Britain” with a renewed sense of the UK’s global positioning

## Regional Focus <sup>2</sup>

### INSITUTIONAL MAP

## United Kingdom



The key actors are the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), and the arm’s length institutions, the British Council and BBC World Service with relative autonomy. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland also have their own cultural institutes, the so-called Arts Councils. In addition, different government departments (e.g. the Department of Education) are involved in public diplomacy initiatives.

### FIELDS OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY

	2019	2015	Comment
<b>Culture and the Arts</b>			Data refer to British Council
Number of countries present	116	110	
Number of institutes and branches	177	196	
Staff	10,963	9,624	
Number of artists in programmes	24,000	-	
Budget (€ million)	1,333	1,075	
Government financial support (€ million)	201	177	
<b>Language</b>			
Number of countries where courses are offered	53	50+	Data refer to the British Council. Here, the British Council teaching centres

<sup>2</sup> Complete information on the regional distribution of all British Council offices and branches unavailable.

	2019	2015	Comment
Number of students enrolled	420,000	400,000	
Number of candidates for language qualifications	4.4 million	-	British Council
Number of language teachers	2,548	2,632	British Council
Budget (€ million)	750	593	
<b>Education – Primary &amp; Secondary</b>			
Number of countries present	n/a	-	Data refer to British Schools Overseas (BSO)
Number of schools	~ 4000	~ 3700	
Number of students	1,200,000*	-	* This is an estimate, assuming that at least 3,000 BSO campuses have an average of 400 pupils each (the average for ISC schools in the UK)
Number of staff / teachers	30,000	-	(BSO)
<b>Education – Tertiary</b>			
Number of countries present	~180	~180	Data refer to the UK transnational higher education (TNE)
Number of universities / colleges abroad	139	132	
Number of students (TNE)	693,695	701,010	Refers to the number of students enrolled at UK TNE
Number of foreign students	452,079	430,833	Refers to the number of total incoming international students
Number of government scholarships awarded	3,453	-	Data refer to a combined number of Chevening, Marshall and Commonwealth Scholarships
Government financial support (€ million)	-	80.3	Refers to spending on scholarship schemes
<b>Science and Research</b>			
Number of countries present	130	-	Data refer to the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)
Number of institutes and branches	4	-	
Number of researchers /staff	7,800	-	
Number of projects	1,750	-	
Number of scientists in exchange	3,829 grants 441 fellowships	-	
Budget (€ million)	390	-	UKRI's total investment across GCRF and Newton Fund is £1 billion
<b>Media</b>			
TV (audience weekly, million)	138	91	Data refer to the BBC World News

	2019	2015	Comment
Radio (audience weekly, million)	173	144	Data refer to the BBC World Service Radio
<b>Total</b>			
Number of countries broadcasted to	200+	-	
Number of languages	40+	29	
Number of channels	-	30+	
Total weekly TV and radio audience for all services and languages (million)	319	246	Data refer to BBC World Service
Global reach	426	320	BBC World Service and Including BBC News and BBC Studios
<b>New media</b>			
Social networks following (million)	British Council: 2.6	-	Combined Facebook, Twitter, Instagram audiences
Digital audience / monthly (million)	British Council: 180 BBC World Service online: 55	BBC World Service online: 41.6	
Budget (€ million)	-	-	

## CURRENT ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS

- The UK is universally recognized as a leading soft power. Thanks to English being the *lingua franca* and the country's international attractiveness, the UK can expect to keep that status. However, other countries, too, are increasingly recognising the importance of international cultural relations in order to expand their global footprint. To maintain its leading position, the UK will have to better coordinate its many soft power assets for maximum effect.
- The UK is renowned for the quality of its education system, but the international student numbers have been stagnating or slowly declining over the past years. Other English-speaking nations such as Australia and Canada are already benefiting from this trend. The cross-government International Education Strategy launched in March 2019 aims to increase the number of foreign students to up to 600,000 a year. In addition, transnational education (TNE) has been identified as 'a key area of growth' in UK education exports.
- The challenge of Brexit amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recession will inevitably have a negative impact on many ECP efforts. The essential EU funding or many cooperation partners will have to be sought elsewhere. Following Brexit, the UK will have to reposition itself, re-engaging with old partners and new allies alike. However, for achieving its "Global Britain" ambition, the UK's external policies will first need to have a coherent and strategic response

## FURTHER INFORMATION, SOURCES, AND REFERENCES

- A user-friendly summary with additional data and data sources is here: "*United Kingdom – External Cultural Policy: Data Fact Sheet*"
- A full set of references is presented here: "*United Kingdom – External Cultural Policy: References*"
- A fuller report with a descriptive analysis is found here: "*United Kingdom – External Cultural Policy: A Report*"

## Imprint

The External Cultural Policy Monitor

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